

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 IO-12

OMB-01 AID-20 EUR-25 RSR-01 /140 W  
----- 087887

P 170442 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1780

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8681

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO TANGIER, USSAG NAKHON PHANOM,  
USDAO SAIGON FROM CANTHO DATED MAY 16 RPTD FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANTHO 0322

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MOPS, CA, HU, ID, PL, VS

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR MAY 16, 1973

1. SUMMARY: VIOLENCE INCREASED IN MR IV, ESPECIALLY IN  
CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE. AN ICCS TEAM INVESTIGATED THE TRA  
ON DISTRICT TOWN MORTARING. RVNAF UNITS STEP UP OPERATIONS  
IN KIEN HOA AND VINH LONG. IN VINH LONG RVNAF IS MANOEUV-  
ERING TO COUNTER THE RECENTLY REINFORCED VC D-3 REGIMENT.  
END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION: MR IV MILITARY ACTIVITY INTENSIFIED  
MAY 15, ESPECIALLY IN CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE. GVN SPOKESMEN  
REPORTED 48 COMMUNIST- INITIATED INCIDENTS, COMPARED WITH 39  
MAY 14. THESE INCLUDED THREE GROUND ASSAULTS, 23 ATTACKS BY  
FIRE ( ABF), 20 HARASSMENTS, AND TWO ACTS OF TERRORISM AND SABOTAGE.  
CHUONG THIEN RECEIVED TWO OF THE GROUND ATTACKS, 15 ABF'S,  
AND SIX HARASSMENTS. RVNAF LOST 29 KILLED, 104 WOUNDED, AND  
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THREE MISSING. THE VC/ NVA LOST 44 DEAD AND THREE CAPTURED.  
(B) SCATTERED, FRAGMENTARY REPORTS FROM CHUONG THIEN LAST NIGHT BEAR WITNESS TO THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE IN THAT UNHAPPY PROVINCE. FIVE ROUNDS OF 107 MM ROCKET FELL NEAR THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE 31 ST ARVN REGIMENT IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF VI THANH. NO CASUALTIES WERE REPORTED. AT 8:00 P. M. UNKNOWN ASSASSINS MURDERED THE FORMER HAMLET CHIEF AT NEARBY NAN CHANH, VI THANH VILLAGE. A FEW MILES AWAY, IN VINH CHAU HAMLET, VINH THUAN DONG VILLAGE, DUC LONG DISTRICT, THE VC STRUCK A GVN OUTPOST, LEAVING ELEVEN GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS WOUNDED.

3. ICCS: AN ICCS TEAM INVESTIGATED THE MAY 10 TRA ON DISTRICT TOWN MORTARING IN VINH LONG PROVINCE, WHICH TOOK NINE LIVES. PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES, GROWING WISE TO "POLGARIAN" TACTICS, LEFT THE BODIES IN THE MARKETPLACE SO THE COMMUNIST DELEGATES COULD NOT COMPLAIN THAT NO VICTIMS WERE TO BE SEEN. BUT THE POLES WERE NOT TO BE DETERRED FROM THEIR DUTY. IN THEIR REPORT, THE POLES DECLARED " NO EVIDENCE THAT THE PLACE HAD BEEN MORTARED WAS FOUND," EVEN THOUGH A CANADIAN CAPTAIN SAID HE HAD SHOWED THE POLISH COLONEL 82 MM MORTAR FRAGMENTS PICKED UP AT THE SITE.

4. COMMUNIST ACTIVITY: A HEAVILY LADEN CYCLO RAN OVER A MINE AT 1200 HOURS MAY 14 IN THANH TRI DISTRICT, BA XUYEN. SIX CIVILIANS WERE KILLED AND ANOTHER WOUNDED. THE MISHAP OCCURRED ON A ROAD LEADING FROM HIGHWAY 4 TO THE VILLAGE OF GIAO HOA, SCENE OF A BLOODY VC ATTACK MAY 3 (CAN THO 0291). ICCS " OBSERVERS" VISITED THE SCENE THE SAME AFTERNOON, BUT HAVE NOT YET MADE A REPORT.

5. GVN ACTIVITY: (A) SINCE MAY 10, UNITS OF THE 415 TH AND 401 ST RF BATTALIONS HAVE BEEN CAMPAIGNING ON THE TRUC GIANG- BINH DAI DISTRICT BORDER IN KIEN HOA. THE VC HAD MOVED WITH RELATIVE FREEDOM IN THE AREA BEFORE THE GVN OPERATIONS. SEVEN RF/ PF HAVE BEEN KILLED SINCE THE OPERATION BEGAN. THE VC HAVE LOST 18 MEN AND A CACHE OF WEAPONS.  
(B) ARVN ENGINEERS MAY 13 REOPENED THE HIGHWAY 7 A BRIDGE OVER THE MANG THIT RIVER IN VINH LONG. COMMUNIST SAPPERS HAD BLOWN THE BRIDGE APRIL 30, INTERRUPTING TRAFFIC ON THE PRINCIPAL OVERLAND ROUTE BETWEEN VINH LONG AND VINH BINH  
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PROVINCES (CAN THO 0265).  
(C) THE SECOND AND THIRD BATTALIONS OF THE ARVN 9 TH DIVISION' S 16 TH REGIMENT ENTERED TRA ON DISTRICT , VINH LONG PROVINCE, MAY 14 TO COUNTER INCREASED VC MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE DISTRICT. THESE UNITS, FORMERLY STATIONED IN KIEN PHONG, HAVE ALREADY ENGAGED THE VC D-3 REGIMENT AND THE 312 TH VC BATTALION. THE NUMBER OF MILITARY INCIDENTS IN VINH LONG,

WHERE TERRITORIAL FORCES HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY PUNISHED BY THE VC, HAS RISEN DRAMATICALLY IN MAY. 87 INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED MAY 1-12, COMPARED WITH ONLY 72 IN APRIL AND 73 IN MARCH (CAN THO 0310). MOST OF THESE INCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED IN TRA ON DISTRICT AND ALONG THE MANG THIT CANAL AND RIVER IN TAM BINH DISTRICT.

(D) THE VC D-3 REGIMENT WHICH WAS NOTABLY INACTIVE DURING THE SPRING 1972 AND CEASEFIRE OFFENSIVES, HAS SHOWN NEW SIGNS OF LIFE. AT THE FAR REACHES OF THE VC/ NVA' S SUPPLY SYSTEM, THE UNIT SUFFERED SEVERE PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES. IT WAS NOT ABLE TO MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE COMBAT STRENGTH THROUGH LOCAL RECRUITMENT OR ADEQUATE SUPPLIES THROUGH CAPTURE OF RVNAF EQUIPMENT. IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS, G-2

MR IV ESTIMATES THE UNIT HAS RECEIVED REINFORCEMENTS AND MUNITIONS FROM VC MR II THROUGH CHUONG THIEN AND SOUTHERN PHONG DINH AND BA XUYEN PROVINCES. VC MR II MAY HAVE FURNISHED AS MANY J 200 NEW SOLDIERS AND SUBSTANTIAL INCREMENTS IN MORTAR AND B-40 AMMUNITION. BATTALION STRENGTH TODAY MAY RUN AS HIGH AS 125-150 APIECE.

WISNER

UNQUOTE WHITEHOUSE

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